Facebook Reveals Several Ways That It Will Support the Black Community Going Forward

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Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg outlined several steps Facebook is taking to support the Black community and diversity, financial and otherwise.

Sandberg said in a Newsroom post that Facebook will invest $100 million: $75 million in cash grants and ad credits to support Black-owned businesses and nonprofits serving the Black community, and $25 million to support Black content creators.

The company committed to spending at least $1 billion with diverse suppliers in 2021 and every year going forward, with at least $100 million going to Black-owned suppliers in areas including construction, facilities and marketing agencies.

Over the next three years, Facebook plans to reach 1 million members apiece of the Black and Latinx communities with free digital skills training covering areas including setting up an online presence and creating marketing materials.

The social network’s Boost With Facebook training program is going all-virtual this summer, due to the coronavirus pandemic, and it kicks off with the Summer of Support program June 24.

The company is expanding on its CodeFWD and TechPrep programs, which provide resources and support to help underrepresented communities get started in computer science and programming, by giving 100,000 scholarships to Black students working toward digital skills certifications.

On Juneteenth (June 19), Facebook will donate a total of $5 million ($19 apiece) to over 250,000 fundraisers on its platform that support racial justice organizations Equal Justice Initiative, Innocence Project and Thurgood Marshall College Fund.

On the product side, Facebook will create a new space in its flagship mobile application, Lift Black Voices, which will highlight stories from Black people, share educational

resources and promote fundraising for racial justice causes.

Sandberg said the social network asked employees for new

product and feature ideas to help fight racial injustice, and more than 700 were submitted.

On Instagram, accounts are being surfaced in search to help people take action on racial justice, and the #ShareBlackStories editorial series will continue on @instagram, @creators, @shop and @design to amplify the voices of Black creators, artists, activists and businesses.

Finally, Sandberg addressed Facebook's workforce, saying that the company already committed to having 50% be made up of people from underrepresented communities by the end of 2023, and it is working to double the number of Black and Latinx employees in the same timeframe.

She added that Facebook committed to having 30% more people of color in leadership positions over the next five years, including 30% more Black people, and it will continue its efforts to boost the representation of women in leadership roles, as well.

Sandberg said in her introduction, "The past few weeks have compelled us to confront the reality of violence and injustice that members of the Black community face on a daily basis. We have shared words of support for our friends, colleagues and communities. We need to take action, as well. At Facebook, we're focused on building powerful tools and resources. We're taking steps to improve our products, programs and policies. We pooled ideas from diverse groups of our employees across different teams on how we can better fight against racial injustice."

She concluded, "Achieving racial justice and equity is a goal all of us share and a goal that will take real work to achieve. This is just the start of how we plan to help in this fight. We'll continue to listen and take action to support the long-term success of the Black community."

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